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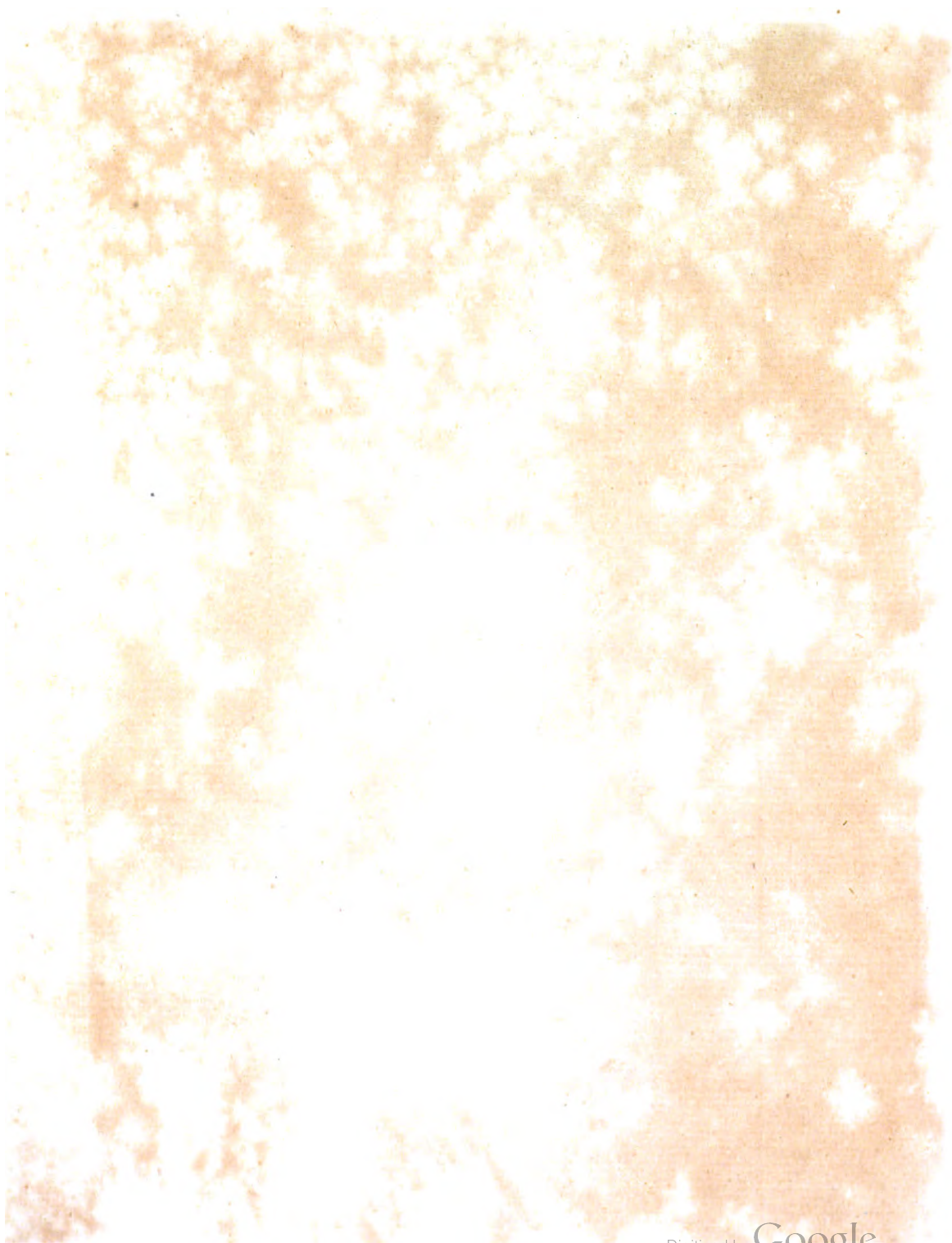


A Book of Giants

William Strang

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THE UNICORN QUARTOS, NUMBER ONE. A
BOOK OF GIANTS, BY WILLIAM STRANG.
PUBLISHED AT THE UNICORN PRESS, VII.
CECIL COURT, LONDON, W.C. MDCCCXCVIII.

A·BOOK OF·GIANTS



DRAWN·ENGRAVED
AND·WRITTEN·BY
WILLIAM STRANG
LONDON·THE·UNICORN PRESS



GO FORTH! brave Giant-book of ours,
To lowly cots and lordly towers;
And travel far to every land,
To China and to Samarcand,
Showing, in manner scientific,
The lives of Giants most terrific.
By wicked critics 'twill be said,
A Giant might have died in bed,
And that the tales are much too diety,
And somewhat lacking in variety.
Go! tell them they are dolts indeed!
That Giants only live to feed;
That with their latest righteous breath
They scorn to die a natural death.

Their whole existence thus depends
Upon their meals and violent ends,
Giving to children, young and old,
Delights and pleasures manifold.

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THE BOOK OF GIANTS



NUMBER ONE — THE FAT GIANT

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



NUMBER ONE — THE FAT GIANT

THE FAT GIANT.

HERE'S a fat Giant fast asleep,
And see the chubby children peep ;
He eats too much, that's what's the matter,
And slowly fatter gets, and fatter :
One day, indeed, he'll be so stout
He'll find it hard to walk about.
For breakfast—to begin the day—
With rolls and buffaloes he'll play ;
A luncheon light of devilled whale
Is washed down with a cask of ale ;
Then as to dinner, served at eight,
The menu's more elaborate :
The larger meats and liquors rare
Make such a toothsome Bill of Fare—

To tell it all, would be a task
Beyond my powers, so please don't ask.
Then he betakes himself to slumber,
Dreaming of dinners without number.
So be careful, still as mice :
You rosy children look so nice,
That should he wake, inclined to sup,
He would be sure to eat you up.

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. II. GIANT & THE STEAM ROLLER

THE GIANT AND THE STEAM ROLLER.

HERE comes the Steam Roller gaily cavorting,
Whistle a-blowing, and clanking and snorting,
Gliding o'er asphalt and skimming the wood,
Spurning macadam, as steam rollers should.
What though the Giant gets into a rage,—
Look at his fate on the foregoing page.
Steam with a head on it, screeching still louder,
Over the neck of him, crushing to powder—
Flat as a flounder it leaves him, or flatter—
And bounds off galloping, as mad as a hatter.

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. III.—THE VEGETARIAN GIANT

THE VEGETARIAN GIANT.

A GIANT lives upon the hill
That sits behind the water-mill,
And he is fierce and strong and bold,
His temper's hot, his eye is cold.

Of prisoners, he holds a stock
Safe in his dungeons under lock :
Judges and jurymen and things,
Soldiers and beggars and some kings.

But he, poor Giant ! can't eat meat,
Yet thinks a steaming joint a treat ;
He tries sometimes a king or two,
But has to pass the roast or stew.

You see his captives, young or old,
Are never relished, hot or cold ;
And when he asks for kings or queens,
They most unkindly give him beans.

To feed his jurymen and judges,
As cattle-rievers round he trudges;
For Giants, as no doubt you know,
Can never let their captives go.

He wears away to skin and bone
For tastes and fancies not his own;
To furnish them he vainly tries,
Till, starved himself, he sinks and dies.

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. IV. GIANT AND UNDERGROUND

THE GIANT AND THE UNDERGROUND.

WITHIN this London rat hole, with never a blink
of sun,
Where grimy men work in a grimy light, and
are never done ;
Down in the dusk of the morning, up in the
dusk of the night,
Digging and screwing and tightening bolts deep
by the flare of a light ;
Murderous fumes that rot the lungs, air that
kills the sight,
Drips from diverted sewers caked on the walls
like bark ;
Above there's a heaven of daylight, below there's
a hell of dark ;—
No wonder that some gasp out their lives within
a consumptive ward ;
No wonder that others, like me, lose what they
can ill afford.
Yet I have all my buttons, though they say that
I am cracked—
Lord ! if they'd seen what I have, or been
racked as I've been racked.

But there ! it's all in the day's work, wages are
earned and paid,
And so we are quits. But are we? No matter,
as I have said,
I have seen things : for one day, when the rest
of my mates had gone,
And I was bundling up my tools, and all the
work was done,
Fumbling along the tunnel came a beast like
none on land ;
And I saw, by my lamp's last glimmer, a most
inhuman hand
Groping among the sleepers and show'ring the
soot from the walls.
Didn't I skip for the daylight? never felt bruises
or falls,
Hardly drew a single breath till I stood in the
open air !
Then out of the tunnel's mouth shoved a sight
to raise your hair !
It didn't stop a minute, but slunk back out of sight,
And when they brought me round a bit my hair
was almost white.
Since then, when I lost my job, a living I've
somehow found ;
And I lose my breath and die the death ere I
work in the underground.

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. V.—GIANT AND THE BICYCLE

THE GIANT AND THE BICYCLE.

BESIDE the coiling rivulet
That dances down the glen,
There is a grassy carpet spread,
Untrod by feet of men.

Near by the white road drags its length,
Like ribbon from a reel ;
And ever and anon there hums
The cushioned tireless wheel.

In the blue night the elfin light
Of lantern flashes by ;
And travellers tell by the purring bell,
The bicycle is nigh.

So hot and dusty is the day,
The wearied rider sleeps ;
While by his side, in burnished pride,
His "bike" its vigil keeps.

What is that sound that frights the ground?
An Ogre of fierce power;
Fasting for weeks—hungry, he seeks
For whom he may devour.

There in his fist the bicyclist
Struggles with might and main;
Adown the vale is heard his wail—
'Twill ne'er be heard again.

The Giant licks his chops and says,
“He was but so-so good;
I'm fresh as paint,—but precious faint
Was I for lack of food.

“I may be green, but this machine
No rhyme nor reason shows,
So I'll annex this pair of 'specs'
To decorate my nose.”

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. VI.—GIANT AND THE KNIGHT

THE GIANT AND THE KNIGHT.

ALAS! the knight, with helm and spear
And panoply of war, I fear,
Is now in such a straitened place,
I really must avert my face.
Crash! he's gone! I feared his doom,
And speculated on his tomb.
What now avail his spear and shield?
His breast-plate and his helm must yield.
Nay, were he clad in triple brass,
'Twould serve no more than so much glass;
And even Bessemer armour plate
Would but delay his awful fate.

The Giant's tongue and powerful jaw,
Huge ivories within his maw—
These graces in the cut are seen.
He sniffs the knight like a sardine
And cracks him with a noise infernal,
Just like a nut. The toothsome kernel
He swallows whole, discards the shell,
And leaves this weary tale to tell.

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. VII.—GIANT AND THE WIRES

THE GIANT AND THE WIRES.

THE city is a dreadful place,
In it is many an anxious face ;
The streets are paved with shining gold,
Which none can see till they are old.

Bulls and bears there harmless walk ;
You hear there many a foreign talk ;
At noon there burn electric fires ;
The sky is strung with countless wires.

At dead of night come witches old,
And pluck the strands with fingers cold,
To soothe the people of their fright,
Or else they could not sleep at night.

A curious Giant, gaunt and lank,
Set out one day to see the bank :
He started eager and elate.
Alas ! none can foresee their fate.

Long ere he reached the city's heart,
The metal threads had played their part ;
Of telephone and telegraph
The single strands he swept like chaff.

But thick and fast they came at last
And foiled him ere a mile was past ;
His hair and beard were first entangled ;
His bleeding hands were sorely mangled.

They bound his arms, they tore his coat,
They twisted, coiling, round his throat ;
His fiercest struggles they defied,
And so he laid him down and died.

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. VIII.—GIANT AND THE ARMY

THE GIANT AND THE ARMY.

OH! will you walk into my larder?

Will you come, will you come?

The way is clear, there's no retarder,

Will you come, will you come?

I see your banner bravely glancing,

I hear your music out of tune,

And there your leader oddly prancing :

Will you come, will you come?

Oh yes, we'll go into your larder,

We will go, we will go!

Our lot is hard, it can't be harder ;

We will go, we will go!

We meet our fate with song and dancing,
No more we stand and bay the moon,
No more of eloquence entrancing,—
We will go, we will go!

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. IX. GIANT AND APOTHECARY

THE GIANT AND THE APOTHECARY.

OBSERVE this Giant grim,
 Observe his hungry eye;
His hat, so wide of brim,
 Obscures quite half the sky.

And hear the apothecary,
 Loudly does he protest—
“I’m tough and old and hairy,
 And awkward to digest.”

The Giant sneers. “You speak
 Quite wrongly on the question;
Your argument is weak;
 I have a strong digestion.”

The man of physic quakes,
Then comes a happy notion,
And with his drugs he makes
An extra deadly potion.

“Take this,” says he, “for it is
A little appetiser.”
Oh, 'tis a thousand pities
That giants are not wiser.

For, hark! the Giant growls,
And look! his eyes grow dim;
Convulsed, he falls and howls,
And that's the end of him.

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. X.—GIANT AND THE TORPEDO

THE GIANT AND THE TORPEDO.

WHOE'ER a warship will molest,
Whether in roguery or jest,
Great chance but he will feel a sting ;
The sweetest joys their smart will bring.

And malice, too, may come to naught,
And to the doer may be fraught
With danger, and on his own head
Recoil, and then he finds he's dead.

This Giant took an early dip,
And spied at sea a simple ship,
And, as he'd often done before,
Bombarded it with stones from shore.

And then to get a closer fire,
And being quite without attire,
He waded half a league from land,
A mighty boulder in his hand.

But ere he could discharge his shot,
A swift and sudden shock he got—
For evil's fruits are always pains—
It strewed the sea with his remains.

The ship so calm, so dark, so still,
Had sent an engine swift to kill ;—
A submarine torpedo (Whitehead)
Came full bow on, and left him quite dead.

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. XI.—GIANT AND MOTOR CAR

THE GIANT AND THE MOTOR CAR.

OH, we were doing fourteen miles, and not an
axle hot,

And easily could make the twenty-five ;
A-flying round the corners, holding on what
hair we'd got,

A-taking all the valleys at a dive.

For the red flag and the man in front we did
not care a jot ;

At the five-mile crawl we surely wouldn't
drive ;

And policemen in their anger, we told to go to
pot :

While careering on a motor, you're alive.

With a "Yoicks" and a "Go"

And a "Hey tally ho !"

And that is how we canter on the highway, O.

We chanced to look along the road a-trailing out
behind ;

Hullo ! and there's the Bogey man at last.
With puffs and growls of rage, and looking any-
thing but kind,

A hundred yards a step, and gaining fast.
But a shot, still in our locker, this Giant sure
will find,

As we open wide the throttle-valve full blast.
She feels it ; and we dance off, leaving Bogey
down the wind,

And crack on steam, and soon the danger's
past.

With a "Yoicks" and a "Go"
And a "Hey tally ho!"
And that's the style to gallop on the highway, O.

THE BOOK OF GIANTS



No. XII.—GIANT & ELECTRIC LIGHT,

THE GIANT AND THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

'Tis true we are an empty vapour ;
All pleasure is a smoking taper ;
And riches, too, are but a smoke,
By adverse winds dispersed and broke.

Yet, for a smoke, we danger dare,
And even stint our Bill of Fare.
'Tis odd, if one cried, "What d'ye lack, O?"
We'd answer back, "Give us tobacco."

It is a growing vice, believe me,
Yet to abstain would sorely grieve me ;
Though it brings ruin on our head,
We burn, when smoking in our bed.

And there be other things as fell
And sudden, as this print will tell ;
For O, that I should give publicity
To that bad pipe-light, electricity.

No rank fusee, no Swedish match
This Giant had. He tried to scratch
A lonely vesta, but 'twas damp ;
His hope forlorn was one street lamp.

And now with expectations high,
He fondly gazed at his bird's-eye,
And to the carbon's glowing soul
He pressed his overflowing bowl.

But O ! the contact was most shocking ;
The Giant, like a mountain rocking,
Shuddered and sank like a dead thing,—
“Electrocuted at Sing-Sing.”

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